

CG Kay Welcome remarks for  
Fulbright Open House event  
(IEW)  
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Journalists' Union

Welcome. Tonight's event has been scheduled as a part of International Education Week -- a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education celebrating the value of international education and exchange in developing mutual understanding and respect around the world.

The United States has long celebrated the diversity foreign students bring to campuses across the country and the invaluable experiences American students gain while studying abroad. Such exchanges expose our citizens to different cultures and experiences and allow international students studying in the United States to learn firsthand about American society and values.

I can tell you from my own personal experience teaching at Georgetown University and serving on Georgetown's Masters Admissions Committee, that attracting quality foreign students is a high priority for American universities. We see the new perspectives, opinions, and experiences these students bring to the classroom as enhancing and deepening the overall learning experience of the entire student body.

The Fulbright program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, has been the U.S. Government's flagship international program of educational exchange for over 50 years. In September 1945, the newly elected Senator from Arkansas, J. William Fulbright, introduced a bill in the U.S. Congress that called for the use of proceeds from the sales of surplus war property to fund the "promotion of international good will through the exchange of students in the fields of education,

culture and science.” One year later, President Harry Truman signed the Fulbright Act into law.

From its inception, the Fulbright Program has fostered bilateral relationships in which other countries and governments work with the U.S. to set joint priorities and shape the program to meet shared needs. The world has seen many changes since 1945, but the fundamental principles of international partnership and mutual understanding remain at the core of the Fulbright Program’s mission.

Today, Fulbright is the most widely recognized and prestigious international exchange program in the world, supported for more than half a century by the American people through an annual appropriation from the U.S. Congress and by the people of partner nations. The program works with universities, schools, bi-national Fulbright commissions, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector to actively seek individuals of achievement and potential who represent the full diversity of their respective societies and to select nominees through open, merit-based competitions.

In one of my favorite quotes about the Program, Sen. Fulbright said that the “Fulbright Program aims to bring a little more knowledge, a little more reason, and a little more compassion into world affairs and thereby to increase the chance that nations will learn at last to live in peace and friendship.” I hope tonight's discussion offers every single one of you the opportunity to contribute to that goal.